



KILLARNEY

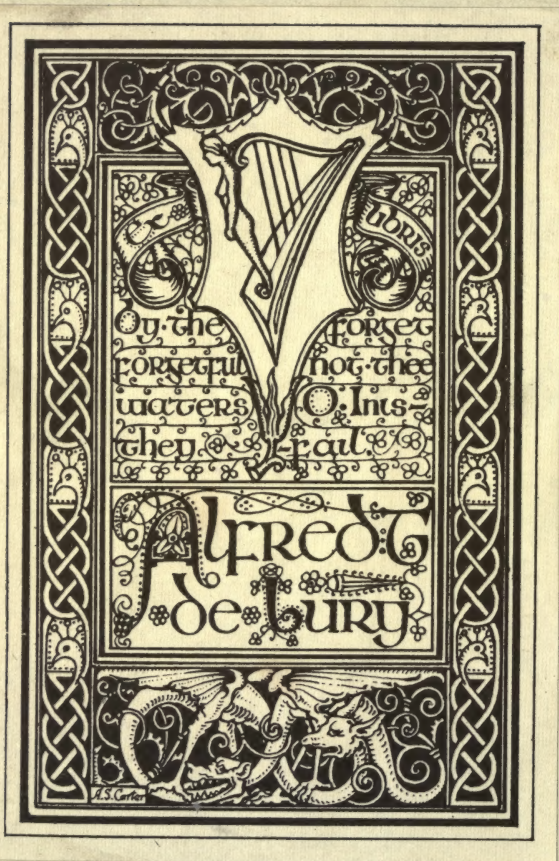
MARY GORGES



BEAUTIFUL IRELAND

























# *Beautiful Ireland*

## *Killarney*

*By*  
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# KILLARNEY

## CHAPTER I

### THE GLAMOUR OF KILLARNEY

KILLARNEY—in Irish “the Church of the Sloes”—though but a small town, is, owing to its position, the centre from which the wondrously lovely scenery of the district may best be explored, a district which has been described as “the Mecca of every pilgrim in search of the sublime and beautiful in Nature—the mountain paradise of the West.” Yet if the magical softness of shimmering wave and wooded isle, the glory of their colouring, the ineffable peace which broods over hill and vale, tempt the summer visitor to think that Paradise could not be fairer, there are dark glens, frowning mountains, and sombre passes, which but too vividly remind the beholder that on earth must the shadow always follow the sunshine, the minor note of sadness be heard, that



## The Glamour of Killarney

even in this enchanted spot has the war-cry many a time been sounded, and men have wreaked their fierce passions and poured out their blood, and women, stricken to the heart, have suffered and died under these tender skies. The ruined castles tell their own story.

To analyze the charm of Killarney Vale is impossible. It is the very region of romance, and one to which fairy legend and ghostly tale seem to fit themselves better than do the common-places of life. There would seem nothing strange were the O'Donoghue on his white charger seen to cleave the wave and emerge on its foam-flecked shore, coming we know not whence, going we know not where, but real as when he trod his native glens, a prince and a ruler among men. The unseen world seems very near to those who have fallen under the spell of fair Killarney.

Part of this charm is doubtless due to the wonder of its beauty, the ceaseless contrasts it presents. I have seen a theory advanced of late years that, as is the land, so are the dwellers thereon; that the character of the soil determines that of its children; the rivers which they look upon, rapid and lawless, or strong and silent; the



## The Voice of Nature

dark forest ; the rich fields or the barren plains ; the mysterious mountain or the gay valley, alike influence—nay, form—their individuality. There is a remarkable passage in the autobiography of a very remarkable man—Stillman (war correspondent to the *Times* in its earlier days), in which he speaks of the effect which a few weeks' sojourn among the then primeval forests on the banks of the Hudson produced upon him. Overwearied by brain work, he had shut himself away from sight or sound of civilization, from human companionship, depending on his gun for food, the waters of the spring for drink. He describes how gradually the artificialities of life seemed to slip from him, and he felt akin with grass and tree, with the skies above him, the clouds which swept over their surface, the glories of the sun by day, the moon and the stars by night. He seemed also conscious of a world of spirits, or at least beings not of flesh and blood, very close to him. Sometimes as he lay at rest upon the grass a radiant face looked down on him ; once or twice a voice spoke. Above all, he felt confident he was being guided when external guidance was impossible, in black darkness, and when a mistake or false step meant death. He believed



## The Glamour of Killarney

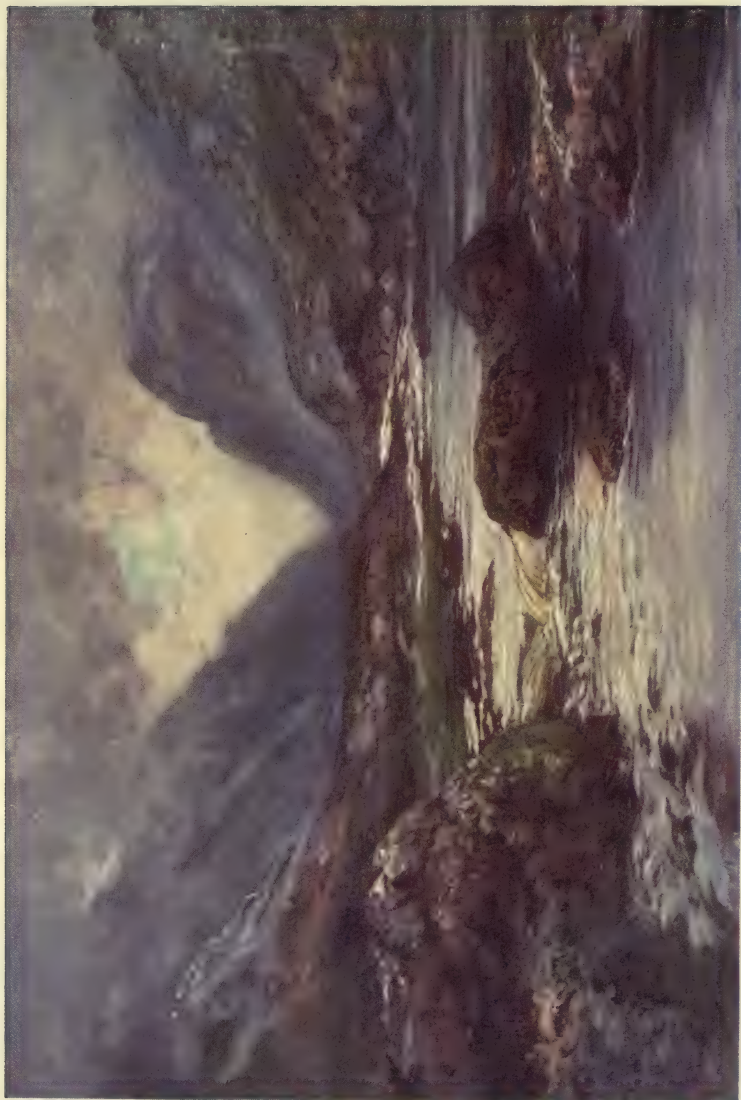
that senses we have lost revive, and that we grow cognisant of a world other than that we habitually live in, as, far away from the haunts of men, we let Nature speak to us once more.

In many voices has Nature spoken to the children of Killarney, weaving something of the changeableness, the melancholy, the deep gloom, and the overflowing sunshine of their hills and vales into the very heart of the people, making them what they are for good or ill. To them has been given vision of the supernatural region as a refuge to the earth-bound spirit from the sordid cares of money-getting ; and so has a world of dreamers, for all their outward gaiety and lightheartedness, been created in the kingdom of Kerry. Dreamers we call them, but, after all, may not Jean Paul Richter's words be prophetic, and the dreamers yet awaken from life's uneasy sleep to find its dreams alone were true.

The name of Killarney conjures up such thoughts. It owes its fame solely to its beauty and to the fascination which the character of that beauty exercises over the beholder. For it is never the same, and every change appeals to the imagination. Who that has seen it can forget the superb tinting of the foliage which







THE GAP OF DUNLOE ON A STORMY DAY.

The wildness of the Gap is a great contrast to the lake scenery to which it gives access.

## The Origin of the Lakes

clothes the mountain sides and transforms the isles into quivering kaleidoscopes of colour, flashing back the light as the waves of a sunlit sea. Then a shadow flits from the mountain tops, and the hues change as though under the spell of a magician hidden among those far-off caves, but only to a yet richer combination. Gorse and heather, arbutus and fern, show a softer radiance, less dazzling, but more sympathetic; silvery rills course down the declivities which surround the lakes, now visible through the trees and giant shrubs, now hidden, but always with a murmur of sound like distant notes of the fairy music which once, it is said, woke the echoes of Killarney. And for those who have the hearing ear it may do so still; with unbelievers the "good people" have no intercourse.

There is a supernatural origin ascribed to almost everything in Killarney—to the lakes among the rest. These are formed and supplied by the numerous minor lakes in the surrounding mountains, and by several rivers which flow into them, having received on their way the waters of innumerable tributary streams, all finding an outlet by the rapid river Laune, which bears



## The Glamour of Killarney

them to the Atlantic through the beautiful bay of Dingle.

But in long-ago days there were no lakes at Killarney—so legend says—only an extensive and inhabited valley, fair and fertile. In this was a magic fountain, which supplied water clear as crystal, concerning which a tradition existed that whoever should displace the stone over the well-head would bring destruction to himself and to the valley. It was the reckless daring of a mortal which caused the fulfilment of this prediction. One of the great O'Donoghues, to prove the falsity of a tradition which he scorned, resolved in evil hour to have the stone removed to his castle. With fear and trembling his subjects, who dared not disobey him, awaited the result, all save his favourite jester, who fled to the summit of a neighbouring mountain. When morning came the jester looked down into the valley, and saw nothing but a great expanse of water. The valley was flooded in a single night, and its inhabitants drowned. It is believed, however, that they did not perish, but still exist under the lakes, enjoying a happier life than the earth one they left, feasting, music, and dancing filling the hours.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ROAD THROUGH THE GAP: ITS MEMORIES AND ITS RUINS

THE principal lakes of Killarney are three in number—the Upper Lake is the smallest, but often adjudged the most beautiful; it is two miles and a half in length by half a mile in breadth. the Middle (Torc or Muckcross) Lake is two miles long by one broad, while Lough Leane (“the Lake of Learning”) is five miles and a half long by two miles and a half in breadth.

These lakes are connected by channels, narrow, though sufficiently wide to admit of the passing of a boat, so in a sense they may be considered as one, yet each lake possesses a character peculiar to itself and very distinctive.

Killarney is easy of access in these days. In less than sixteen hours the tourist may reach it from London, via Holyhead, while Queenstown, Liverpool and the newer route by Rosslare



## The Road through the Gap

afford facilities for visitors from every land. And once arrived they find all the comforts and luxuries of modern civilization in the first class hotels, which have sprung up to meet the ever increasing need of accommodation ; hotels from some of which the visitor may view the beauty of lake and mountain, the lights and shadows, the glory of their colouring, without going further afield.

Killarney itself is a small town of which there is little to record. Adjoining is the Earl of Kenmare's demesne, with its fine gardens and splendid golf links ; the latter one of the best inland courses in Ireland. Visitors can use it on payment of a small green fee.

To proceed by land to the far-famed Gap of Dunloe, and, traversing it, take the road to the Upper Lake, is the general plan followed by the stranger, for this best shows a great and varied extent of country, with such contrasts of softness and grandeur — nay, desolation — as no other scenery presents.

In this land the past has graven deep its records in ruined castle, tower and abbey, each with its tale. And the first of these after leaving Killarney, is to be found at Aghadoe (in Irish

## Aghadoe

Acadh-da-ca, “ the field of the two yew trees ”). It is about two miles from Killarney, and a slight detour to the right must be made to visit it.

Aghadoe stands on an eminence commanding most lovely views of the lakes and mountains. It was an ancient bishopric, and here is the ruin of its Cathedral church, which consists of two chapels of distinct periods of antiquity. They lie east and west of each other—that to the east, probably dating from about 1158, is in the Pointed style, and dedicated to the Holy Trinity ; the more ancient, in Hiberno-Romanesque style, appears to have been built some centuries before the coming of the Normans, and is far richer and more beautiful. The western end contains a doorway of recessed arches, covered with particularly fine mouldings and decorations.

Not far from the western end are the remains of what must have been a very fine Round tower, judging from the style of its masonry, now, however, only about 15 feet in height. Many of its stones have been taken away and converted into tombstones for neighbouring churchyards, or some other need of the mason. The Castle is another massive circular fragment of about 30 feet in height, sometimes called “ The Bishop’s



## The Road through the Gap

Chair," sometimes "The Pulpit," and believed to have been the residence of the bishops of the diocese.

Following the road to the north side of the lake, several fine demesnes are passed, one of them, Lakeview House, being the residence of Sir Morgan Ross O'Connell, Bart, grand-nephew of the Liberator. It is a beautiful drive, and many a tale of the past will enliven the way, as, crossing Beaufort Bridge over the Laune, you reach Dunloe Castle at the west end of the lake, about seven miles from Killarney town.

Dunloe Castle stands on a height from whence the view is glorious. This Castle is the seat of the Mahonys, and is very ancient. An old history of Kerry mentions that its floors are formed of very fine planks of the yew tree, a wood which, when well wrought, has a more beautiful grain and polish than mahogany. Bees have taken up their residence for centuries in this old fortress. They are in curious niches and angles behind the massive walls and under the floors. They disturb no one and refuse to be evicted. A bee-keeper tried if he could tempt them beyond their bounds by laying "sections" in a place to which they had access, with a hope

## Dunloe Castle

of securing some of the honey. They took no notice. Through a cupboard in one of the walls, you can see far back a host of these little people, the self-constituted guests of Dunloe Castle, very busy over their affairs.

There is a fishing lodge close to Dunloe Castle. This is let during the season, and very fine sport is to be had. The splendid lake and river fishing about Killarney is no small attraction to the angler, both being well stocked with the finest trout and salmon.

A very remarkable cave near the Gap of Dunloe was accidentally discovered in 1838, and was then and subsequently explored with much interest. Its roof has now fallen in. It was a subterranean chamber of circular form, the walls of uncemented stones inclining inwards, with a roof also of long transverse stones, the angles of which are covered with Ogham writing, "which is to the Irish antiquary what the Runes are in the north, the Arrow-headed or Wedge characters in Babylonia or Persepolis. Archæological discoveries in Ireland are of more general interest than formerly, as the earth is laying bare her secrets all over the world, and what is discovered in one country is found to have its bearing on



## The Road through the Gap

something brought to light in another." The discovery of Ogham characters in this cave was additional evidence that the Irish had a literature far in advance of the rest of Europe and long before the Christian era.

Close to the entrance of the Gap stands Kate Kearney's cottage as, whether it contains a "Kate" or not, it will always be called. There is many a pretty girl in Kerry whose bright eyes, clear colouring and beautiful hair attract the passer by, but Kate will be remembered to the end of time, because of the few lines which, "lilting" from a poet's heart, conferred upon her the crown of immortal youth and beauty :

"From the glance of her eye, shun danger and fly,  
For fatal's the glance of Kate Kearney!"

It is the fashion to depreciate Moore as a poet, to compare his lyrics to the notes of a musical-box, sweet indeed, but devoid of true inspiration. Yet he fulfilled a noble mission in his day, rescuing and bringing to light the music of his country, wedding it to words that tell its story or reveal its beauties instead of the worthless jingle which had so often degraded it. It was Moore's poetry which greatly helped to make Killarney



THE HEAD OF THE GAP OF DUNLOE.





## Thomas Moore

known early in the last century to many in England.

Readers of the literature of that day will know what an influence Moore was in its intellectual circles—his wit, his geniality, his singing, “the effect of which,” writes N. P. Willis, who met him at Lady Blessington’s, “is only equalled by the beauty of his own words.” His voice was of small compass, but exquisitely modulated and expressing every shade of feeling and sentiment, so that women have been known to faint as they listened to his singing, which awakened, perhaps, a buried sorrow, a long past anguish.

Once enter the Gap of Dunloe and the scene utterly changes; gone is the soft verdure, the brilliant tinting, silent the song of birds. On either side rise huge rocks, of strange, fantastic shapes, often appearing half suspended over the path, while never far from it rushes the dark Loe, “a brawling and angry stream,” which traverses the whole length of the Gap, about four miles, often passing along heights, then tumbling into depths with rush and roar, now near, now distant, but ever voicing the wild emotions which seem to lurk amid the gloom of this stern defile. It expands into five lakes, called collectively the



## The Road through the Gap

Cummeen Lakes, during its passage through the Gap.

Tradition ascribes the origin of this wild pass to a stroke from the sword of a mighty giant, which separated the mountains and left them apart for ever, MacGillicuddy's Reeks on one side, Toomies and the Purple Mountain on the other. Very stern and grand look the Reeks, one of their peaks, Carn-tual ("the inverted sickle") rising higher than any mountain in Ireland—3,414 feet above the level of the sea. There is softer beauty on the mountains to the left, the Purple Mountain in particular (2,739 feet in height). The lovely hue which pervades this mountain is generally ascribed to a purple heath, which covers its sides, almost to the top, with perpetual bloom. Its name, however, was originally derived from an immense pile of loose stones and slates of a purple tint, which becomes intense when the sun shines upon them.

It is from the Gap of Dunloe that the Purple Mountain should be ascended; it is not a formidable climb, but ponies await those who fear the fatigue. The view from the summit is magnificent.

The western base of this mountain descends

## Chess in Ancient Ireland

into Augher Lake, and close to this spot is the Woodwork Factory, where carved specimens of arbutus and other woods can be obtained in inlaid tables, chess and backgammon sets, card cases, etc.

Chess is believed to have been played in pre-historic times by the ancient Irish, and the frequent mention of the game long before the Norman invasion shows it was a favourite one. "The chess board was called in Irish 'fithcheall,' and is described in the *Glossary* of Cormac of Cashel, composed towards the close of the ninth century, as quadrangular in shape, and having straight spots of black and white. Some of these were inlaid with gold and silver and adorned with gems. No entire set of the ancient men is now known to exist, though frequent mention is made of the brigade or family of chessmen in many old manuscripts. Kings of bone, seated in sculptured chairs, about 2 inches in height, have been found, and specimens of them engraved in recent antiquarian publications" (D'Arcy Magee's *History of Ireland*).

The most striking part of the Gap is where the valley contracts so as to bring the precipitous sides very close together. The peasants have



## The Road through the Gap

named this the Pike, and to the grotesquely formed rocks along the pass they have also given names—the Turnpike, O'Donoghue's Heart, and so on. The impression conveyed as you proceed, is of gloom and of a certain aloofness from the ordinary. The eagle soaring above is no uncommon sight.

A little distance from the Pike is a lonely tarn called the Black Lake (Loch Dubh), where St. Patrick imprisoned the last Irish snake, which is supposed to live in its depths. A little south of the Pass the spot is pointed out where the last Irish wolf was slain.

There is a stamp of wild force in all that meets the eye while traversing the Gap, which is not diminished as at Gap Cottage the end is neared. At its commencement cars have had to be abandoned. You must ride or walk. If you have elected to walk you will probably now be footsore and weary. Even the sure-footed ponies generally used may not prevent fatigue from the rough, precipitous road, but it is forgotten when, on leaving the Gap, a turn in the path brings in view one of the most famous glens of Killarney—the Black Valley. This was formerly described as so black, so desolate, that it might have been

## The Black Valley

named the Valley of the Shadow of Death. It owes this reputation merely to its English name—a mistranslation from the Irish one—Cumin Dubh (O'Duff's Valley). No one knows who this O'Duff was, however, and the Black Valley is a more romantic name for a singularly wild and beautiful scene.

The path now inclines to the left, bringing in view the Upper Lake, its waters glowing like burnished gold, if, as often happens, it approaches the sunset hour when you reach it. How lovely it looks, guarded on every side by those great mountains which hold so many secrets !

Not without a passing regret do we leave the Gap. It has its own charm, arousing wonder and curiosity and a certain awe. One really feels when the Pike is reached as though there was nothing strange in its having emanated from the giant's sword.

The scene surveyed from here is very beautiful, and tempts delay, but the Upper Lake must be reached. By the side of the hill you descend is the Logan stone, or "balanced rock," long considered a wonder of Druidical times. Some affirm now that its rocking motion is from natural causes, but, set as it is on the lonely hill, it looks



## The Road through the Gap

as if it well might have been fashioned by those stern old heathen.

Still descending, the road takes a sharp backward curve to the foot of Fubrahy's Crag; then, turning again, it continues till, after crossing a bridge, it passes through an opening in the wall into Gurmaheen Demesne, within which are tea and waiting rooms, called "Lord Brandon's Cottage." From thence a short path descends to the Upper Lake, where in some sheltered bay your boat awaits you.







## CHAPTER III

### THE LAKES AND THE MOUNTAINS

No one has ever realized the enchantment of Killarney or fallen under its spell who has not been upon its waters. As the boat glides into the Upper Lake, all that has ever been said of its varied beauty seems poor compared to the reality. The mountains which surround it on every side give indescribable grandeur to its scenery—so much so that, added to the contrasted beauty of its wooded isles, it is on the whole conceded that it bears the golden apple from its sister lakes; certainly, as the boatmen row from point to point, you say so, and memory, bringing back the vision in after days—perhaps in the hot and dusty thoroughfare—confirms the verdict.

The Upper Lake contains twelve small islands, some of them of such a height that at a distance they resemble so many lofty towers standing in



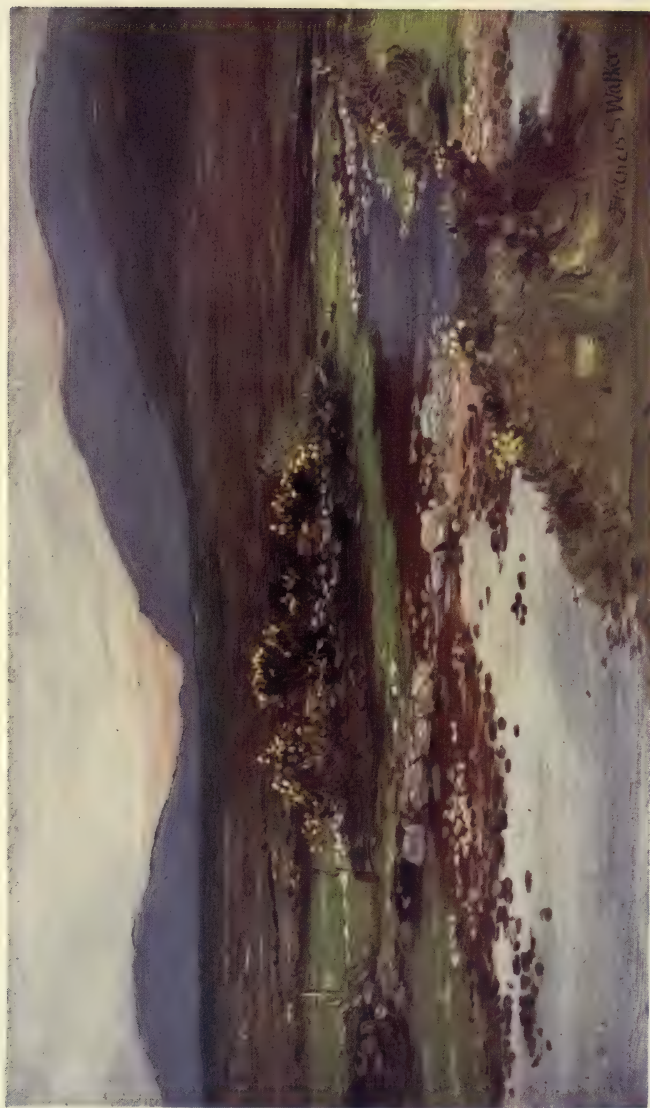
## The Lakes and the Mountains

the waters, their summits crowned with bright green wreaths of the arbutus and many another verdant shrub and tree. In other aspects they appear to represent the ruins of stately palaces. To add to this effect, their edges are so much worn by the dashing of water against them, and by rains washing away the earth, and "time hath so disjoined these marble rocks," that some hang in such curious fashion as to represent a rude architectural formation.

The extraordinary verdure, not only of the isles, but of the mountains, is even more striking viewed from these lonely waters than where man has left more perceptible trace of his presence. It seems incredible that giant fern, tree-shrubs, and plants should flourish in tropical profusion at the great heights to which they attain, and without the artificial aid which is impossible.

This wonderful foliage is the glory of all the islands, but here it throws into intense relief the sublimity inseparable from great mountain scenery, and even in point of height the McGillicuddy's Reeks can claim greatness. More than a hundred years ago Holmes, in his *Tour in Ireland*, records his first glimpse of the noble range: "Their peaks immersed in mist and





AT THE FOOT OF MANGERTON MOUNTAIN, KILLARNEY.



## Mountain Foliage

storms, along their prodigious furrows the cataracts, swollen by recent rains, tumbling with fury and glistening like liquid silver; in a little time the peaks piercing through the clouds, the grey mists slow descending like a great curtain, through which the sun darted his rays."

The Purple Mountain, always beautiful and changeful in aspect as the lakes themselves, looks down from the north, while on the other side rises Torc's noble outline, and further off great Mangerton.

Many of the mountains are densely wooded to a great height—giant ferns, the rowan, holly, yew, juniper. Above all the arbutus grow in a tangle of profusion, and on rocks where no earth appears. How the steep rocks and crags can give root-hold to this forestry of green is a marvel to the beholder, the roots being simply filaments entwining themselves round crevices in the stone, holding on with a grim tenacity which defies the wildest storm—better even than the forest tree. The birds of the air have dropped their seeds, or the winds carried them to this their home, and they will not let it go. Here will they stay as long, perchance, as the rocks themselves.

"I expected the loveliness I met," said an

## The Lakes and the Mountains

English visitor to Killarney lately, “and I believe the strongest impression made on me was by those beautiful tropical shrubs in mid-air, as they seemed, and with no apparent hold on the soil.”

The arbutus is supposed by some to have come from Spain and to have been cultivated in the first instance by the early monks; but the more general belief is that it was indigenous. It is not to be found of spontaneous growth nearer to Ireland than the very south of France and Italy, and only as a shrub, while about the lakes and mountains here it often becomes a large and tall tree. Pliny mentions it as extraordinary that it should thus grow in Arabia, and Petra Bellonus also observes this as occurring on Mount Athos in Macedonia. But it seems to love its Irish home best, and to revel in the luxuriant growth which makes it so noticeable in Killarney's leafy forests.

The blossoms of the arbutus grow in clusters of white bells, not unlike those of the lily of the valley, in great abundance, and nestling under bunches of bright green leaves. It has, at the same time, ripe and green fruit on its branches, first a deep pale yellow, deepening, as it advances







O'SULLIVAN'S PUNCHBOWL, KILLARNEY.

## Some of the Islets

to ripeness, then a brilliant scarlet like that of a strawberry. Autumn and winter are the seasons of its greatest bloom and beauty.

A most beautiful cascade at the western end of the lake tumbles down the mountain side and empties itself in a dazzling sheet of foam into its waters. The music of its fall seems very close as the boat passes the various isles, and you are told the legends connected with them. One in particular, MacCarthy's Island, is pointed out as the last refuge of one of the great family. We will find other memories of this powerful sept in many a local tradition. Here a battle was fought, a fort taken or lost, triumph or defeat, and then you are pointed to a grave—the end of it all !

But on the Upper Lake it is hard to think of anything but the lovely, lonely scenery—lonelier because of the everlasting hills which compass it around.

Eagle Island was once the haunt of these royal birds, and still the golden eagle has not forsaken it, though less seldom seen. Ronayne Island is named after one who lived there, apart from his fellow-men, in self-chosen solitude. At each point there is something to relate, while every

## The Lakes and the Mountains

turn produces a change in outline or colour so as almost to form a fresh scene. Many a lovely little bay and channel are explored, till too soon the boat passes the last islet, enters the last bay, rounds the last promontory.

A very narrow part of the passage occurs here where this promontory juts out, leaving a breadth of only about thirty feet. It is called Coleman's Eye. Some legendary person is said to have leaped across the stream here, leaving his footprints on the rock beyond.

And now, with long look and reluctant farewell, we are on the Long Range, the river connecting the Upper with its sister lakes.

In Holmes' *Tour* he thus characterizes the Long Range : "I should distinguish the Upper Lake as being the most sublime, the Lower the most beautiful, and Muckross Lake the most picturesque, the winding passage leading to the Upper containing a surprising combination of the three, probably not to be exceeded by any spot in the world."

The Long Range is about two miles in length. Its margins are gemmed with water-lilies, snowy and golden. Here the *Osmunda regalia* is seen growing almost in forests, and of great size, its



## “The Light of Love”

branches, as well as those of the alder, birch, yew, arbutus, and many another, entwining as if they grew from a common root. Other rare ferns, some peculiar to Kerry, as the Brutle fern (*Trichomanes speciosum*), completely clothe the wild crags on either side. But it is hopeless to attempt specifying the variety of foliage, the different shades of green, the masses of heather and gorse, which in all stages of their bloom, their first spring glory, or the no less lovely golden and brown tints of autumn, make the most rugged mountain sides beautiful. And let not the little “bog down” be forgotten which around Killarney makes the bogs resemble waving fields of snow. “Light of love” the peasant girls call this bog rush, for a breath sends its down floating lightly away. A little white tuft of silky cotton, from its shortness of no practical use in the work-a-day world, so it lives its life unharmed, gay as the bog-land dwellers themselves.

Very wild and grand is the scenery here. Rocks in a hundred forms appear as the banks are passed, and behind, at nearer or further distance, rise the greater mountain heights.

The boat passes several islets, named from

## The Lakes and the Mountains

resemblance, real or imaginary, The Jolly Boat, The Cannon Rock, The Man-of-War Rock—a mass like a vessel, keel uppermost. Soon the far-famed Eagle's Nest is reached, a rugged, precipitous cliff 1,700 feet high. Here the eagles still have their nest, for Nature has secured them from the hand of man. It is a very majestic rock, thickly clothed with evergreens nearly to the summit, where, however, heath and a few scattered shrubs hide the nest, and show the great outline, the rugged mass, in stern sublimity. Here the Killarney Echo is best heard.

Perhaps among the many writers who have tried to describe the effect produced by this echo, Mrs. Hall gives the most vivid impression. She says: "The bugler first played a single note; it was caught up and repeated loudly; softly, again loudly; again softly, and then as if by a hundred instruments rolling around and above the mountains, and dying softly away. Then a few notes were blown, a multitude of voices replied, sometimes pausing, then mingling in a strain of sublime grandeur and delicate sweetness. Then came the firing of a cannon, when every mountain around seemed instinct with angry life, and replied in voices of thunder, the



MUCKROSS LAKE AND GLENA MOUNTAIN FROM TORC COTTAGE—EARLY MORNING.





## The Killarney Echo

sound being multiplied a thousandfold, first a terrific growl, then a fearful crash, both caught up and returned by the surrounding hills, while those nearest became silent, awaiting the oncoming of those that were distant, then dropping to a gentle lull, as if the winds only created them, then breaking forth again into a combined and terrific roar."

Soon after passing Eagle's Nest the end of the Long Range is reached, and the stream divides, skirting round Dinish Island into Lough Leane on the left side, to the right passing under Old Weir Bridge into Muckross Lake.

The Old Weir Bridge consists of two arches ; only one affords a passage for boats, and as the water of the Upper Lake rushes into Muckross Lake on its way to the sea through the Laune, the current is extremely rapid, and it is quite usual for tourists to disembark and walk, meeting the boat on the other side. Those with strong nerves, however, enjoy "shooting the rapids." You then find yourself in Torc (or Muckross) Lake, and opposite Dinish Island, on which is a pretty cottage, where it is usual to halt for rest and refreshment. The chief feature of the latter is salmon, broiled in cutlets on a fire made of

## The Lakes and the Mountains

arbutus, the slices skewered on a spray of the same, which is said to impart a delicious flavour to the fish.

There are so many objects of interest clustered around the Lakes that it is vain trying to compress them into the description of a day's excursion. When time is an object, the tourist can manage to "do" the whole three lakes, but if time permits, the point we have now reached should be the limit of his first day, and a row home over the lovely waters of Lough Leane to Ross Island is a fitting close to it. The grand old Castle never looks so picturesque as in the evening glow; let it be his last memory of the day.





MUCKROSS, KILLARNEY.

From above Torc Waterfall, showing the upper and lower lakes with the peninsula which divides them.



## CHAPTER IV

### MUCKROSS

NOTHING more beautiful than the scene viewed from Muckross ("the place of wild swine") can be imagined. Its woods and lawns form a large promontory, shooting far into the lake, which the wooded isles beyond seem almost to join, the water breaking and glancing between like tiny bays. Muckross Abbey Mansion stands in lovely grounds, which, fringing the slope to the water's edge, form a beautiful shore to the lake.

The scene which this point commands is unrivalled—indeed, Torc lake (Torc, a wild boar) need fear no comparison. Toomies and Glena are opposite, so softly outlined by the beautiful waving forests which cling to their sides that their magnificent height is half forgotten. In contrast the hills which rise above



## Muckross

the Eagle's Nest are bare, broken, almost savage.

But if it is hard to convey by words an idea of scenery in general, more difficult is it with that of Killarney, so varied are the effects produced under its changeful skies,

"Shining through sorrow's beam,  
Saddening through sorrow's gleam."

Mr. Young, our English visitor of long ago, notices this much. In one place he observes: "Torc was obscured by the sun shining immediately above him, and, casting a stream of burning light on the water, displayed an effect to describe which the pencil of a Claude alone would be equal."

The ruined Abbey of Muckross stands in the grounds of Muckross demesne, and was founded by a MacCarthy Mor in 1340, according to the *Annals of the Four Masters*, upon the site of a much older church, which was destroyed by fire. It was built for Conventual Franciscans, and was dedicated to the Holy Trinity. The original name was Irrelagh.

The two principal parts of the ruin are the convent and the church, the latter about 100

## The Ruined Abbey

feet in length and 24 feet in breadth, the steeple standing between the nave and chancel, resting on four high and slender pointed arches.

The cloisters are in a very perfect state, consisting of a beautiful quadrangle of marble arches, some pointed, some with semicircular heads, enclosing a square, in the centre of which stands the great yew-tree, said to be as old as the Abbey itself. It rises to the height of 60 feet, its spreading branches overshadowing the cloisters and forming a canopy, impervious to the sun. The circumference of its trunk is 13 feet, and it is regarded with much awe because of a belief that anyone attempting to pluck a leaf or branch, or in any way injure this yew, will not be alive on that day twelve months.

The principal entrance is by a handsome Pointed doorway, from which is seen the great eastern window, with its simple, beautiful tracery. The space within is filled with tombs, many of them nameless. A large modern one in the centre of the choir covers a vault, where in ancient times were interred the MacCarthys, and, more lately, the O'Donoghues.

Close to this tomb is the slab which formerly covered the vault, without inscription, but bear-

## Muckross

ing the arms of the Earl of Clancarty of the old creation, this title and that of Viscount Valentia being bestowed by Queen Elizabeth in 1565 on Donald MacCarthy Mor, the head of the elder branch of that great family. His haughty followers would none of it, and slighted the chieftain who had condescended, however grudgingly, to accept an honour at the hands of the Sassenach.

The dormitories, cellars, kitchens, refectories, etc., are in good preservation, but the upper rooms are unroofed. There is a great fireplace in the refectory, where once the monks kept good cheer. Very silent and deserted it is now, with the innumerable graves around.

The great Torc Cascade empties itself into Muckross Lake a little more than a mile from the Abbey. It comes from the Devil's Punch Bowl, which it is worth ascending Mangerton to see. On the western side of the mountain is a small circular lake, about 600 yards in diameter across the top. From the brink, as you look downwards, there is a depth of nearly 300 yards. This is the Devil's Punch Bowl. On the side next Muckross there is an immense perpendicular chasm, equal in depth to the height of the sides



## The Devil's Punch Bowl

of the Bowl, into which its overflowings rush and are conveyed through a narrow channel, called the Devil's Stream, to the shore of Muckross Lake, tumbling down the sides of the hill, nearly 200 feet, in a great cascade.

In the peninsula of Muckcross is a mine, now disused, which, when worked by an English company in 1804, gave a large output of the finest copper ore.

There are many indications of mineral treasures yet to be discovered among the hills and glens of Killarney. When Dr. Berkeley was asked his opinion of Muckcross at a time when Art was considered far superior to Nature, he replied: "The French monarch might possibly be able to create another Versailles, but could not, with all his revenues, lay out another Muckcross."

## CHAPTER V

### ROSS, INNISFALLEN, AND THE LOWER LAKE

Ross is only separated from the mainland by a narrow cut through a morass, which gives it its claim to be an island.

This division is probably artificial, and made in former days to strengthen the fortifications of the Castle. A carriage road from the town of Killarney crosses the small connecting bridge and brings the tourist under the walls of Ross Castle, where there is a landing-place for those who come by water.

Ross Castle is still a splendid old fortress, far less injured by time or mischance than most of its contemporaries in Kerry. A tall and stately building, it is seen from far, dominating Lough Leane and adding additional charm to the view, with its massive buttresses and battlements, reminders of the old fighting days. It is but a short distance between Ross and Muckcross, yet

## The Guides

the character of the scene is utterly changed. Say what we will of the other lakes, Lough Leane remains the lake of enchantment.

Ross is a very ancient Castle, built by some far-back O'Donoghue, the precise date unknown. Within is a spiral staircase of stone mounting to the top, from whence a marvellous panorama lies before you.

In 1652 Ross Castle was held by Lord Muskerry for the King, during the Parliamentary wars, against General Ludlow. It was well garrisoned and provisioned, and the defenders were prepared vigorously to repel the foe, yet they surrendered almost at once. There was an old prophecy that Ross Castle would never be taken till warships were seen on the lake, and when the garrison beheld the boats which General Ludlow had built and conveyed overland approaching to attack, they yielded. The prophecy was fulfilled: it was useless to fight against fate. But it is more to legendary than historical lore that Ross Castle owes the fascination which surrounds it.

The guides of Killarney deserve mention here, for they add to the enjoyment of the various excursions, knowing every legend, each associa-



## Ross, Innisfallen, and Lower Lake

tion, the origin of every name, and are even capable of inventing on the spur of the moment romances the most picturesque, wonders the most thrilling, discerning at a glance on whom to expend their powers of imagination. "All sorts and conditions of men" come under their ken. In the tourist season scarce a land but has its representative, to some of whom Ireland was a sealed page till they listened to the tales of Killarney from her guides.

Here they point to you the very window from which the great O'Donoghue leaped into the lake below. There he reigns in the regions of enchantment, greater and happier than in his earthly sovereignty. Once in every seven years on a May morning, before the first beams of the sun have arisen over the mountain tops, the sweetest strains of fairy music are heard, and the great chieftain may be seen on a splendid snow-white charger, shod with silver shoes, riding over the lake, preceded by a joyous band of youths and maidens scattering flowers before him. Well it is for the mortal who sees him; prosperity will follow from that day forth.

Just, generous, and greatly beloved were the O'Donoghues of Ross, and their memory is per-

## The O'Donoghues of Ross

petuated among a people who do not easily forget. Wander where you will, you find some association with the name, particularly among rock and crag on the Lower Lake, of which O'Donoghue's Horse is the most remarkable. This rock has been fretted and worn away by the action of the waters into a curious semblance of a horse in the act of drinking. Then there is O'Donoghue's prison, his table, his pulpit—each with its story.

You will be told, too, how at the deepest part of this lake, more than 60 fathoms down, at a spot between Ross and Innisfallen, a great carbuncle may be seen, which on a dark night lights up the rocks at the bottom of the lake, and shows the palaces and towers of the ancient city which the waters now cover.

Ross is the largest island on the lake. It contains about 80 acres. On the southern point is a famous copper mine, opened in 1804 by Colonel Hall, who found clear proof that it had been worked at a very remote period. Rude stone hammers of very ancient make were discovered—Danes' hammers, the people call them—and the traces of fire were found. The vein, however, gave out after four years, during which

## Ross, Innisfallen, and Lower Lake

time, says Crofton Croker, "nearly £60,000 worth of ore was disposed of at Swansea, some cargoes producing £40 per ton."

The country round the lakes is very rich in ores of various kinds. Lead ore has been discovered, and the mountains abound with iron. Specimens of ore which contain tin are also found.

Killarney has treasures, however, which better suit the witchery of her beauty. Pearls are found in Lough Leane, and still more often in the River Laune, which runs out of it. These are, of course, very inferior to the Oriental jewel, but now and again a fine specimen is obtained. "A little Kerry pearle" was not considered an unworthy present to a great man in 1756; also "a dozen Kerry stones," these probably being the beautiful amethysts found in the cliffs near Kerry Head. These have always been valued. A set of ear-rings, a necklace, and other ornaments composed of these amethysts were presented to Queen Caroline (wife of George II.) by the Countess of Kerry, and most graciously received. A like gracious reception was given to an Irish pearl presented by the Bishop of Limerick to the great Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1074.







THE ISLAND OF INNISFALLEN.

In the lower lake of Killarney. It once possessed a monastery where the "Annals of Innisfallen," now at the Bodleian, were written.

## Kerry Diamonds

Very brilliant are the "Kerry diamonds," and very pretty, but valueless save to the children who pick them up, and perhaps to that fairy world whose standards are not the sordid ones of mortals. To them these lovely crystals, whether clear or coloured, may be the true treasure.

Beautiful Innisfallen, with hill and glen, creek and harbour, and cliffs overhung by trees shading the many bays. The Gem of Killarney it is called. "Not heaven's reflex, but a bit fallen out of heaven itself," were Macaulay's words, and they express the feeling called forth by its rich verdure, its wonders of foliage and of colour, the ineffable beauty which clothes it as a mantle. Yet so great are its contrasts that in this island of 24 acres are woods as gloomy as the ancient Druidical forests, thick with giant ash and enormous hollies.

As you approach the island you seem to draw near such a forest, so close are these great trees, extending into the water. On landing, you find they encircle a lawn of the deepest and most vivid green. Open glades through the trees give enchanting vistas—the lofty peaks of Toomies and Glena, the misty summits of the Purple Mountain, Ross Castle and its wooded shores, sunny islands and sparkling waters, sometimes so



## Ross, Innisfallen, and Lower Lake

still as to reflect the woods and mountains as in a mirror. In the morning hour the mountains bordering on the Lower Lake are left in shadow, but as the day goes on the sun glides imperceptibly along the line of the great chain, and darts his rays on that side of the mountains which lies next to the lake. All their bold irregularities are then revealed—their protruding rocks, their deep glens, and the lake is illuminated amid its dark and wooded isles by the long gleams which pass athwart its waves.

At such hours it looks too fair a world for sin and sorrow, but yonder stands the Castle, with ruined battlements and many a grim sign of the stormy past, while fair Innisfallen itself contains a ruin where once holy men maintained a warfare equally deadly against the powers of evil, though fought with no mortal weapons.

Little remains of the Abbey of Innisfallen, founded in the sixth century by St. Finian. Even the walls are levelled save for the remains of an oratory, whose western gable contains a doorway with rich decorations. This monastery, however decayed, will always be famous, because the *Annals of Innisfallen* were written here.

The original work is in the Bodleian Library.

## The Annals of Innisfallen

It is on parchment and in medium quarto, and contains fifty-seven leaves. Extracts from the Old Testament and a history of the ancient world down to the arrival of St. Patrick in Ireland in 432 form the earlier part. From this period it deals exclusively with the affairs of Ireland, terminating with 1319. It seems to have been the production of two monks, one carrying it to 1216, the other continuing it to 1320. It is one of the earliest of Irish histories, and considered by savants as taking high rank among them.

In 1100 the Abbey was plundered by Mildwin O'Donoghue of a great treasure of gold, silver, and rich goods of the adjacent country, which had been deposited there as secure sanctuary. Many of the clergy were slain by the MacCarthys, "But," writes the monk, "God soon punished this act of sacrilege and impiety by bringing many of its authors to an untimely end."

Well, there is peace now in fair Innisfallen. The visitor bears away its impress with the memory of one of the fairest spots on earth.

"Sweet Innisfallen, fare thee well,  
May calm and sunshine still be thine;  
How fair thou art let others tell,  
To feel how fair yet still be mine."

## Ross, Innisfallen. and Lower Lake

Glena, the "glen of good fortune," is one of the most eagerly sought out beauty spots of Killarney. Glena Bay is the first part of the Lower Lake if it is entered from the Long Range, but by whatever way you reach it the picture which meets the eye is unsurpassed.

The mountains of Glena and Toomies are densely wooded to their base, the trees hanging over their sides and coming down in rich luxuriance to the water's edge. A very forest of the finest arbutus, with berry and blossom together in autumn, with oak, ash, pine, birch and alder, white thorn, yew, and holly, it must be seen to realize the colour effect or the matchless tintings of gorse and heather, a great mosaic quivering in the sunshine. The varieties of this immense scenery of forest are impossible to describe, the woods extending about six miles in length, and from half a mile to a mile and a half in breadth, while the inequalities of the ground produce wondrous effects of light and shadow.

Glena is all soft loveliness, but rugged rock and crag, and the stern grandeur of Torc Mountain on the other side, strike again that minor chord never far from Killarney's brightest scenes.





IN A TYPICAL COTTAGE.



## O'Sullivan's Cascade

Lough Leane has upwards of thirty isles, large and small, and as the boat is rowed past Glenna shore you see them in all their varied form and colour, from Ross to tiny Mouse Island. It is a fair sight. There is a little bay at the foot of the Toomies where you can land to reach O'Sullivan's Cascade, one of the greatest of the Killarney waterfalls, not only from its size, but from the peculiar formation of the bed down which it dashes. It really consists of three falls. "The uppermost, passing over a bridge of rocks, falls about 20 feet perpendicularly into a natural basin; then, bursting between two hanging rocks, the torrent hastens down a second precipice into a second receptacle, from which it rolls over into the lowest chamber of the fall. It is about 70 feet high. The roar of the descending water can be heard from afar, and is almost deafening when near. Beneath a projecting rock overhanging the lowest basin is a grotto, with a seat rudely cut in the rock. From this little grotto the view of the cascade is peculiarly beautiful. It appears a continued flight of three foamy stories. The recess is overshadowed by an arch of foliage so thick as to interrupt the admission of light."



## Ross, Innisfallen, and Lower Lake

The forest about Toomies is still the haunt of the old red deer of Ireland, and a grand stag hunt is occasionally organized, the cries of the hounds, the shouting of the hunters, the firing of the signalling cannon, combining to awake the mountain echoes for many miles around. It is a cruel sport, though the stag is now, as a rule, saved from death. Yet its gallant attempts to save itself, its struggles to get free from the cordon of enemies around, its agonies of terror as, bounding for refuge to the heights, it is confronted by shouting men, and turned to confront the savage pack, are cruel enough. It leaps from rock to rock and chasm to chasm with sobbing breath and big tears, and plunges into the lake in desperation, to be met by the boats watching for it. Of late years it is set free, but it is not sentimentality to imagine that the grim experience it has passed through will render the life given to it a thing of terror, haunted by the bay of the hounds and the shouts of the hunters.





MOUNTAIN HOMES OF THE KILLARNEY DISTRICT.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE KILLARNEY FOLK

THE people who dwell on the shores of these lovely lakes are a handsome race, tall and finely formed, with clear-cut features and dark and most expressive eyes, often of the Irish grey or deep violet, with long black lashes. Pencilled eyebrows and abundance of dark-brown hair usually accompany these, and that clear complexion which the moist western breezes confer. They love music and dancing, the "boys and girls," who, meeting on a roadside, only require a merry tune to "foot it away" and forget their cares.

But with all their lightheartedness their standard of duty is very high, and family ties are sacred. Seldom, if ever, is infidelity known among the married, and a certain honour is given to the head of the poorest household. Husband and wife each has a distinct place, which neither

## The Killarney Folk

would dream of usurping, the husband having the chief, of course. In one case, however, and that a very important one to an Irishman, right of precedence is universally granted to the wife. This is when it happens that she is by birth of a superior tribe to her husband. "I am a McCarthy; my husband is only a so-and-so," she will say proudly.

There are many "shealings" around and on the sides of the mountains, where the "mountainy men," as they are called, cultivate patches of land with a success due to their patient industry. They have hens, a few goats, and perhaps some lean mountain sheep, and all these are liable to visitations from the eagles when rearing their young. Often, too, they have one or two cows of the Kerry breed, which find sweet pickings among the rocks, and give more milk on the scant herbage than the sleek and well-favoured kine of richer counties. This breed is small, with long horns and wild, handsome heads.

Simple-hearted, generous and faithful are these men and women, with a dignified courtesy of manner which tells of the Eastern strain in their blood. Their courtesy and good manners

## Love of the Classics

are, indeed, very charming. For instance, you may have been out all day with a man, and when you reach his home he will step in first, and, turning, offer you his hand and bid you welcome, as though it were the first time he had met you that day. He welcomes you, and then you will be placed in the seat of honour, and refreshments brought you, the refusal of which would be an insult.

The love of classical learning among the peasantry was great. It continues still, though the classics are not cultivated in this practical age as in the days when they were taught by travelling scholars at the hedge schools. All the old writers on Killarney mention their wonder at meeting poorly-clad men and boys able to converse fluently in Latin, and studying the best Latin, and even Greek, authors. The power of reading Homer in the original was greatly coveted, and often attained. The magic of their surroundings may have had much to do with kindling the peasant's imagination to passionate interest in a dead language.

The first distinct mention of the sea-coast adjoining Killarney occurs in the works of Ptolemy, who wrote in the second century. He



## The Killarney Folk

speaks of the river of Kenmare under the title of Iernus, while again it is called Fluctus Desmond, or the River of Desmond. At this Iernus of Ptolemy is placed by ancient authors the landing of several Milesian colonists, and though Irish history before the Christian era is chiefly traditional, there seems some foundation for this.

If we believe the bards and seers, the Milesian immigration was the fifth which came to colonize Hibernia out of the overflowing tribes of Asia. Of the fourth, the Tuatha de Danans, they tell a curious tale. These colonizers are depicted as accomplished sooth-sayers and necromancers who came out of Greece. They could quell storms, cure diseases, work in metals, foretell future events, and, by their supernatural powers as well as by virtue of the Lia Fail, or Stone of Destiny, they subdued the Firbolgs, who had preceded them, and exercised sovereignty, till they in turn were displaced by the Gaelic or fifth immigration.

Sometimes these called themselves Gael, from an ancestor ; sometimes Milesians, from Milesius, projector of the immigration ; sometimes Scota, from his wife. They came from Spain, and all their magical arts did not save the Tuatha from

## Early Settlements

defeat. "In vain they surrounded themselves and their coveted island with magic-made tempest and terrors ; in vain they reduced it in size so as to be almost invisible from sea. Amergin, one of the sons of Milesius, was a Druid skilled in all the arts of the East, and, led by him, his brothers countermined the magicians and beat them with their own weapons."

Among the mountains of South Kerry the peasants point out a stone where Queen Scota, daughter of Pharaoh of Egypt, and wife of Milesius of Spain, is believed to lie buried. She was killed in battle three days after landing with her sons on this coast. Upon the flat of the stone is an Ogham inscription, which reads, "Leacht Scoihin" ("The grave mound of Scota"). Ogham experts think this inscription a forgery, but the old tradition makes it at least probable that within sound of the thunder of the Atlantic, far from her own people, lies the daughter of the Pharaohs.

From an antiquarian point of view Kerry is one of the most interesting places in the British Isles, and very rich in relics of the past. An archæological society has been formed, which is endeavouring to rescue the relics and monuments

## The Killarney Folk

from neglect and decay. Killarney has been found a singularly promising field to explore, though much has perished.

The Celtic nature is curiously complex, and those who do not themselves possess it find it hard to understand. It has one quality in which no other race has ever equalled it, and that is a marvellous power of absorbing alien nationalities to itself, so that, while conquered, it yet conquers. It is a matter of current knowledge that the English became more Irish than the Irish themselves. They intermarried with the families of native chiefs, gave their children to be nursed by Irish foster-mothers, spoke the Irish tongue, espoused the Irish interests. Had this power of amalgamation been encouraged, and not sternly repressed by the English Government, there was a period when it might have changed completely the destiny of Ireland ; but it was not to be.

There is an interesting poem by an Irishman, "The Geraldines," from which I quote one verse :

"These Geraldines! these Geraldines! not long our air they  
breathed,  
Not long they fed on venison in Irish water seethed,  
Not often had their children been by Irish mothers nursed,  
When from their full and genial hearts an Irish feeling burst.



## The Celtic Character

The English monarchs strove in vain, by law, and force,  
and bribe,  
To win from Irish thoughts and ways this more than Irish  
tribe;  
For still they cling to fosterage, to *breitheamh*, cloak, and  
bard;  
What King dare say to Geraldine, ‘ Your Irish wife discard ’ ?”

## CHAPTER VII

### THE FAIRIES—AND FAREWELL !

THE Raths, or “fairy forts,” of Killarney have hitherto seldom been explored. They are circular grassy mounds enclosing a field, generally small. Underneath are found stone chambers, their beehive roofs and walls made of unmortared stone. It is supposed that here the ancient Celts fortified themselves and their cattle, retreating in winter into the stone chambers. Be this as it may, for centuries the Irish have believed them to be tenanted by a fairy race, whose palaces are here, and who guard hidden treasure.

These are the Sidhe, or people of the hill, the noblest among these mysterious folk. Some say they are the spirits of the Tuatha de Danan, that strange race which occupied Ireland till the Milesians came, when, conquered by a greater magic than their own, they disappeared. Strange



CUTTING PEAT FROM THE BOG.

It takes less than a week for a man to cut his fuel supply for a whole year.





## Hanafin and his Cows

to say, no mortal descendant of these people has ever been traced in any Irish family.

But there is another race, and these are the fairies proper, very human in their traits, tricky and malicious if slighted or offended, but good friends if treated properly. I cannot resist quoting a story ("Hanafin and his Cows") told in a late Kerry Archæological Magazine by Lady Gordon—a tale of the fairies, originally collected in Kerry by Mr. J. Curtin.

"Hanafin was a farmer owning a large herd of cows, which were driven up every morning to be milked in front of his house. For several days the tub into which the milk was poured was mysteriously overturned and the milk spilled. Hanafin's wife was naturally excessively indignant, but, in spite of every precaution, the milk continued to be upset. One morning, however, as Hanafin was walking past a fairy fort, he heard a child crying inside it, and a woman's voice saying : ' Be quiet awhile ! Hanafin's cows are going home ; we'll soon have milk in plenty.' Hanafin went home and personally supervised the milking, and on the usual overturning stopped his wife from scolding, telling her this time it was no fault of the girls, who had been pushed

## The Fairies—and Farewell!

by one of the cows against the tub. ‘Leave it to me,’ he said; ‘I’ll try and manage the business.’

“The following morning, on hearing the child cry again in the fort, Hanafin, ‘like the brave man he was,’ went inside. He saw no one, but he said, ‘A child is crying for milk. A cow of mine will calve to-morrow. I’ll let no one milk that cow; you can do what you like with her milk.’

“The tub was never overturned again, and for two years Hanafin prospered in every way, taking good care of the cow, and never letting her be milked.

“Unfortunately, however, Hanafin, being soft-hearted, went security for some of his neighbours who had got into trouble, with the result that their creditors came down on him, and the bailiffs arrived one day to drive off his cattle. Hanafin repaired to the fort, and said: ‘I’m going to lose all my cattle, but I’ll try and keep the cow I gave you, and feed her still, so that the child may have the milk.’

“Three bailiffs came and went down to the pasture across the field, but when they drove the



## Mischievous Fairies

cows up as far as the fairy fort 'each bailiff was caught and thrown hither and over by people he couldn't see. One moment he was at one side of the ditch, the next at the other. They were so roughly handled and bruised that they were hardly alive, and they not seeing who or what was doing it! The cattle, raising their tails, bawled and ran off to the pasture.'

"The following morning ten policemen and bailiffs went to take Hanafin's cattle, with exactly the same results, so that the men 'barely left the place alive.' Never again did police or bailiff meddle with Hanafin's cattle, and the creditors never collected their money."

These are the familiar fairies who stole children out of their cradles, young matrons from their husbands, and girls from their lovers; who bewitched cows and blighted potatoes, but who "did you many a good turn too." The peasant will not lightly lose faith in them, nor will the fairies lightly forsake the land of beauty, of sunshine, and of shadow. Quickly as events march and ideas change in this wonderful age, hurrying we know not where, and though here and there someone may be found to dare—or say he will—enter a fairy fort or cut down a fairy

## The Fairies—and Farewell!

thorn, I think that with the boldest of these unbelievers it is a case of the man who denied the power of the priest to turn him into a rat, but who, saying "It's as well to make sure," took the precaution of shutting up the cat at night. "Taking it all round," writes Lady Gordon, "it would be a drab world if there were no fairies in it, no supernatural region in which nothing is too preposterous to occur . . . Earth-bound humanity, seeking to escape from earth cares, still dreams in one form or other of a land of strange happenings."

How much remains still to be said about Killarney, its varied interests, its shifting, matchless scenery! The lover of beauty and romance, the historian, the archæologist, the antiquary—it is a field for each. It has begun to dawn on the mind of many explorers what great questions hinge on Celtic antiquities, what light they may shed upon the ancient history of Europe, while students of the Irish language say it will yet prove the key to ancient ones which are puzzling philologists. Killarney is rich in Ogham inscriptions, in curious old remains and relics (utilized hitherto by mason and builder). Such as are not hopelessly lost are gradually

## An Epitome of the Scenery

being unearthed by the ardent seekers of to-day.

Whatever changes may be in the future, Killarney must ever remain a land of enchantment. Perhaps a few recent words of Alfred Austin may fitly close this attempt to sketch the principal features of this fair land.

“The tender grace of wood and water is set in a framework of hills, now stern, now ineffably gentle, now dimpling with smiles, now frowning and rugged with impending storm, now muffled and mysterious with mist, only to meet you again with brilliant sunshine. Here the trout leaps, there the eagle soars, and there beyond the wild deer dash through the arbutus covert, through which they have come to the margin of the lake to drink, and, scared by your footstep or your oar, are away back to bracken or heather-covered moorland. But the first, the final, the deepest and most enduring impression of Killarney is that of beauty unspeakably tender, which puts on at times a garb of grandeur and a look of awe, only to heighten by contrast its soft loveliness. How the missel thrushes sing, as well they may ! How the streams and runnels leap and laugh ! For the sound of journeying



## The Fairies—and Farewell!

water is never out of your ears, the feeling of the moist, the fresh, the vernal is never out of your heart."

No, never! True words are these with which reluctantly to say farewell to beautiful Killarney.

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